

INTERVIEW WITH MRS. LORETTA SCHULMAN

April 26, 1979

Conducted by:

Dr. James Dodson

--and--

Miss Randy Thompson

Interview With Loretta Schulman

Dodson: Now, Mrs. Schulman, I wonder if you would give us your full name and note how long you've lived here in the valley?

Schulman: My full name is Loretta Ethel Schulman and I've lived in the valley, I came out in 1923. In the valley. It was Girard at the time.

Dodson: What section is that now? What's it called?

Schulman: Woodland Hills.

Dodson: Woodland Hills.

Schulman: In fact, my husband gave it that name.

Dodson: Is that right?

Schulman: Yes. When it went into bankruptcy, you know, when we had the depression, that section went into bankruptcy and a Mr. Thomas took over. I forget what they called him. What do they call a person who takes over? A trustee?

Dodson: I don't know.

Schulman: Well, he took it over then and the few people that did live in the valley were very unhappy with the name of Girard. They were against Girard. They wanted to name it something else and they made a petition, had everybody say what name they'd like and my husband chose the name of Woodland Hills. That's what it was. They had a chamber of commerce at the time and my husband was president. He named it Woodland Hills.

Dodson: Well, I'm really pleased to know about that because no one else has told us that. So, you've given us a piece of valley history we haven't had from anyone else.

Schulman: Yes, and when we came out there there were no trees at all. Have you been out there?

Dodson: I'm familiar with it.

Schulman: You've seen those big pepper trees? Girard, when it was Girard, planted a hundred thousand slips, pepper trees. Now, they're ready to take them all out. They're dying. That was in 1923 also, when we

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started to subdivide. And, of course, when they started to subdivide they had tractors going 24 hours a day cutting down the hills and making roads and what not. I think Mr. Girard was the first one that really built adobe houses. You know, out of adobe?

Dodson: I think the early mexican settlers did that.

Schulman: Yes, they did but as far as. . .

Dodson: {interrupting} Anglos?

Schulman: Yes. Uh huh. You could buy a house and lot for \$4500. dollars. Beautiful little house. Two bedroom house. Nice piece of land. Course, when the crash came you couldn't give them away.

Dodson: No.

Schulman: In fact, uh, they tried to get some money out of it and rented those little houses for \$10 dollars a month. Half the time they couldn't collect the rent.

Dodson: I know that was a pretty drastic time for many people.

Schulman: Yes, it was but they survived. Of course, I think now that Woodland Hills didn't have all that land that they have now. At the time Girard was started it extended as far as the, it extended as far as the, they called it the Old Topanga road and then it became Walnut Acres. Walnut Acres isn't there anymore it's called Woodland Hills and Woodland Hills did not extend north of Ventura. Now, it extends a way north but at the time of Girard it was very, it was 22 hundred acres.

Dodson: And Girard was entirely south of Ventura then?

Schulman: The whole thing was south of Ventura.

Dodson: I see. Do you know what other roads would have bounded it? On the east and west?

Schulman: Well, on the east, do you know where that, uh, it used to be, they built a theater-in-the-round at, I forgot the name of it.

Dodson: I know where the theater is.

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Schulman: That was the east boundary.

Dodson: Chalk Hills?

Schulman: Chalk Hills.

Dodson: So, Chalk Hills was a part of Girard?

Schulman: Yes. You'd have to go over Chalk Hill to come to Girard. Course, they had no freeway. It was just a two lane highway, gravel. The thing that I remember is, you know, cutting the roads and building the houses and, uh, we had a fire there. I think it was in 1926 or 27 and no water, you know. So, everybody that was available, I don't know, it's just a memory now to me, but they got a hold of an old fire engine and we lived sort of on a hill like. We lived on Don Peal {sp?}. We lived in one of the first houses that they built here, although their offices were downtown. Their original offices were on 4th and Main, 4th and Spring. Later on they moved to the Subway Terminal Building on 12th and Hill. They had to gather up all the kids. The men were working, you know. They couldn't get them to pull the hose, you know. Put the fire out. I can remember that very vividly. There was no gas here at all. Everything was electricity.

Dodson: There was no gas in the valley?

Schulman: No gas here at all. We,uh, in fact, we had to get an electric stove and we were heated by electric, you know, the heaters. Course, your electricity was very, very, high then.

Dodson: I can imagine it would have been. When did the gas come into the valley? Do you happen to recall?

Schulman: No. Now, we moved from the original house to a house on Don Peal. No, we lived on Don Peal. We moved to a house on Campo. That was in 1933. It was just previous to that they had gas because we had a new gas range, I remember, in the house. So, probably '30. From '30 to, I don't think they had gas before that. I know in '23, '24, '25, they had no gas at all. We used electricity or, they didn't do much barbecuing in those days. They didn't know about those things.

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Dodson: (laughing) That was a new development.

Schulman: Yes.

Dodson: I imagine that's true of things like swimming pools, too?

Schulman: Well, you'd be surprised. In 1925 they built what was called the Girard Country Club. It was a golf club. It had a beautiful club house, beautiful course. Took em a couple of years to make this, you know. The country club had a big swimming pool. My oldest son was a lifeguard there.

Dodson: I was thinking of private homes having them as so many do now.

Schulman: Oh. No. None at all because the lots were small. The lots that they sold. They were only 50 feet wide and, I don't, I think they were 50 feet deep. The houses were like little cracker boxes, you know; living room, dining room, kitchen, and one bath.

Dodson: I think you said that you came to the Los Angeles area in 1917.

Schulman: Yes.

Dodson: But you came to the valley in 1923.

Schulman: Yes. 1923.

Dodson: What caused you to move to the valley?

Schulman: My husband got connected with Mr. Girard.

Dodson: Oh. Is that right? He was associated with him.

Schulman: With him.

Dodson: Where did you come from originally?

Schulman: Chicago.

Dodson: I see.

Schulman: We came out here on our honeymoon and just stayed.

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Dodson: You hadn't planned to come out to live?

Schulman: No. No. We just came out on our honeymoon in 1917. November of 1917. My husband was an attorney. He was a graduate of the University of, I don't remember which. It was in Illinois. When we came here they had, [word inaudible], you didn't have to take an examination. That was in '24. My husband met Will, what's his name, Will Rogers the attorney.

Dodson: Wil Rogers the humorist?

Schulman: No. No. The attorney. What's his name? Rogers. He was very famous at the time. [text inaudible]

Dodson: I see. I'm not familiar with it.

Schulman: Oh. He took a sort of shine to my husband and said, "well, why don't you stay here." My husband loved it. He, himself was born in Nashville, Tennessee and he loved the warm climate. And he did want to stay. So, he says, "you know, you don't even have to take the examination if you have an attorney that will speak for you they will admit you to the bar." And he did that. Then he met Mr. Girard and Mr. Girard talked, oh, how he met Mr. Girard was, they didn't have any collection agency then here and my husband was familiar with, not a collection agency but where they look you up to see how good you are financially. Do you remember the name?

Dodson: I don't know the name but. . . .

Schulman: {Interrupting and apparently speaking to someone else in the room.} Do you know the name?

Voice: {reply is inaudible}

Schulman: No. They have a, no, but it was prominent at the time. It's connected with them. They didn't have anything of a. . . .

Voice: {Interrupting} Dun and Bradstreet?

Schulman: Dun and Bradstreet. Oh, yes.

Dodson: Dun and Bradstreet. Yes, I'm familiar with them.

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Schulman: Yes. They formed that here and that's where he met Mr. Girard. Mr. Girard told him that, although he was a builder many years before that, Mr. Girard. He built what is in the, uh, what he would say was, uh, in the southwestern part of town. He did quite a bit of building there. Everybody thought he was crazy coming out here. He says, "well, alot of people are coming and they have to go someplace." He was right. They came out this way. So, he talked my husband into joining him and, in the meantime my husband had been admitted to the Bar, although he never practiced his law it came in very handy in the work that he did with Girard. He never gave up his license. He renewed his license every year, as an attorney. So, that's how he met Mr. Girard.

Dodson: What ever happened to Mr. Girard?

Schulman: He died. Oh, well, when they went into bankruptcy this Thomas, see, I don't know, I'm not, I haven't got enough of the business so I can remember just how it worked, but this Thomas was one of the heads and then he kept my husband on. He let my husband stay, which he did till the very last and Mr. Girard went to Malibu. You know where Sunset goes down to the sand?

Dodson: Yes.

Schulman: Well, there. He himself had a beautiful home on top of one of the bluffs. He died in, when did we leave Malibu? In 1952, 53. In 1952-53. He died that year. He had a son and a daughter. He also had a wife. He was never divorced. They were separated. His wife lived in San Francisco and his daughter lived in San Francisco. The son lived out here. Then the son married the head of the express, the American Express, uh, his daughter. Jerry married his daughter. They lived here for awhile then they moved back east, New York. So, whatever happened after that I don't know.

Dodson: So, no members of the family live here now?

Schulman: No members and I doubt if his wife is still, maybe she is. She'd be a lot older than I and I'm pushing 82.

Dodson: Well, I'm glad you told us cause we wouldn't have guessed it.

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Schulman: Oh, yes. That's why my memory isn't as good as I would like it.

Dodson: Well, I'm of the opinion your memory is excellent for all that you've told us.

Schulman: Thank you. Thank you.

Dodson: Was it the depression then that bankrupted Mr. Girard?

Schulman: Yes. Yes. Although, I don't think it ever bankrupted him personally.

Dodson: But the company that he was associated with?

Schulman: Uhm hum.

Dodson: I see.

Schulman: He wasn't a well-liked man. You might as well tell the truth about people, living or dead. He, uh, people did not like him. They hated him. They felt that it wasn't so. That he didn't do the right thing by them. You know, when he went bankrupt. They had the depression. They couldn't keep up their payments. He couldn't do anything about it. They had to lose their money, their place. There were a lot of people from different cities, different states that bought land here. When they started out, you know, they had the lecture lunch. You know what that is don't you?

Dodson: No, I don't.

Schulman: How they got people out here. They had no transportation out here at all, you know. From Laurel Canyon on they had no transportation and they'd put adds in the paper where they'd meet certain people, if they were interested, and take em out to Girard and furnish lunch and they had a very good lecturer there. They had a very good lecturer and they had them from Santa Barbara all the way down, you know. They had them from different spots. They'd pick them up and everything. Everyday they'd bring them out and they built, sort of, an auditorium on {word inaudible} right off of Canoga. Canoga Avenue. They'd have a nice lunch for them and a very good lecture and a lot of little closing offices, you know, where they'd {inaudible} the buyer.

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Dodson: Yes, I didn't recognize the word but I'd read about that.

Schulman: Yes. Yes.

Dodson: And they had busses that would pick them up.

Schulman: Yes. And about 1926 or 27 the red car line came in. It came in as far as, it wasn't called Canoga Park at the time it was called Owensmouth. It was named Canoga Park much later.

Dodson: No one can tell me where that name Canoga Park came from. Do you know where?

Schulman: No, I have no idea.

Dodson: Well, I've been asked about that and so far no one has been able to tell me where that name came from.

Schulman: I know it sounds like Indian, doesn't it?

Dodson: Yes, it does and we do have some Indian names along with the Spanish ones. Cucamonga, I think, is Indian.

Schulman: Yes, Cucamonga but that isn't out in the valley.

Dodson: No, it's quite a ways away. Well, then you never went to school in the valley at all, did you?

Schulman: No. My children did. My children. My grandchildren. My great-grandchildren go to school in the valley. There's four generations that were born here.

Dodson: Is that right? Did you feel that your children and grandchildren had a different type of schooling than you did? Do you see any differences?

Schulman: Oh, yes. Without a doubt. My earliest recollection, I only went to high school never went to college, and our schooling was much tougher than the schooling that the children get here. We always had homework.

Dodson: And you felt that they often didn't have homework?

Schulman: I know they didn't have homework.

Dodson: What did you feel about discipline?

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Schulman: I think, in my estimation, they were sort of lax. You know, they weren't as strict as they were when I was young.

Dodson: Now, some of the people that have been with me in the interviews have been very much surprised at one thing I have asked about. When you were in school were many students using narcotics?

Schulman: Didn't know what the word meant.

Dodson: {chuckling} I see. That's exactly what everybody tells us. It's very hard for some of my associates to realize that. This is a completely modern development.

Schulman: Absolutely. I didn't know what the word narcotics meant. I knew drugs, you know, the word "drugs." That was a common word. "Drugstore." We called it the "apacary," uh, "apocrathary" [sp?].

Dodson: You may, very well, have done so.

Schulman: Oh, but smoking, I knew what it was. I never smoked. My father used to roll his own cigarettes. I remember that but none of the children ever smoked.

Dodson: Now, when you came out to the valley, what sort of social life existed in the valley.

Schulman: Very little, because in the community itself, you know at the time we were just building, and after people moved in there were about 7 or 8 families that we were friendly with. After the club started we had dinner parties and dancing and, course, I didn't play golf. I took lessons but I didn't play golf. I played bridge with a lot of the women and we had, uh, I remember Bette Davis used to come out here and play golf when she was married to that Tom, uh, Tom Harmon [sp?] was it? I think that was his name.

Dodson: Could be. I don't know, myself.

Schulman: Tom Harmon.

Dodson: Now, that name sounds familiar.

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Schulman: And I think he was a football player. Was he a football player, Tom Harmon? {to Dodson} Would he be about her age now? Harry's age? Well, it could've been. She was married to a Harmon, I know. {We are not sure who Mrs. Schulman is speaking to as the sound quality of the tape is extremely poor.} Anyway she used to come out here and play golf. We had a lot of big names at that time.

Dodson: Al Jolson lived in the valley for awhile. Did you happen to know him?

Schulman: No, but, uh, I used to see, he lived in Encino. I'll tell you who I used to see. I used to see Young.

Dodson: Loretta Young?

Schulman: Not Loretta Young, uh, Robert Young. What was the name? There were 4 brothers. Don Ameci. They lived in the valley here. We used to see them. They'd come to the club for dinner, you know. Every once in awhile on a saturday night. We had a big affair, you know. We'd have dinner there.

Thompson: Was that the major club in the valley?

Voice: {In the background. Inaudible}

Schulman: It has one of the finest reputations as far as the golf is concerned. It's kept up beautifully now.

Dodson: Edward Evans Horton. . . .

Schulman: {interrupting} Horton lived out here, too. They were spread so far apart. Oh, there were any number of them.

Voice: Carole Lombard.

Schulman: There's Bill Harris. Bill Harris lived out this way. Bill Harris and, uh, . . .

Dodson: {interrupting} I think Jack Oaky [sp?] lived in the valley.

Schulman: I didn't know them.

Dodson: And, of course, Bob Hope has a home in Toluca Lake.

Schulman: In Toluca Lake, but that's so far from here. That's a beautiful little section.

Dodson: Yes.

Schulman: Of course, they claim that Woodland Hills, now, is the most beautiful section in this part of the valley.

Dodson: Were there any movie theaters when you came out?

Schulman: No. No movie theaters. They had a restaurant at the clubhouse. And then they had, right on the corner of Topanga and Ventura, they had, I don't know what it was originally but they turned that into a restaurant. The other restaurants were just shacks along the boulevard, you know. They all specialized in fried chicken.

Dodson: (laughing) Well, I understand there were quite a few poultry farms in the valley.

Schulman: Oh, yes. A lot of them.

Dodson: In fact, where our college is now, part of it was a dairy and part a poultry farm.

Schulman: Where is that?

Dodson: Uh,

Voice: Valley College!

Dodson: Yes.

Schulman: Oh, Valley College. Yes.

Dodson: Do you remember that area at all?

Schulman: Yes.

Dodson: There was a dairy there. It belonged to a family named Chokan [sp?].

Schulman: I didn't know them. We knew the Droegees [sp?] that lived out that way.

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Dodson: I'm not familiar with that name.

Schulman: Now, where Warner has his ranch now, you know, right opposite. That belonged to a private party and they raised prize bulls there. They had some cows where their milk was special and they used to send that milk as far as Paris.

Dodson: Is that right?

Schulman: I remember that so well. And they had a big fire there one time. This must have been about '38. '37 or '38. Am I talking alright?

Dodson: No, that's alright. Just checking that to be sure the tape hadn't run out.

Schulman: OH. They sent one of the bulls, too, also to Paris. I remember this one particular bull when they had the fire they were so afraid the bull would be burnt. They had great big rings and he was a BEAUTIFUL animal. They saved the bull but the dairy farm burnt down. They saved the livestock. That was Brant. That was called "Brant's Ranch." Brant's owned it then.

Dodson: Well, was most of the valley agricultural then, when you first moved here?

Schulman: All along from the time you left Ventura and Laurel Canyon there were all orange trees along the way. When the trees were in bloom it was just wonderful. The only bad part was if you left the car windows open you'd have a car full of bees. I remember one time a bee got in and got on my knee and I got right over. Luckily, there was a small embankment. So, I always remembered to keep my windows closed.

Dodson: I understand there were quite a few walnut trees in the valley?

Schulman: Well, that's what I was saying. That that belonged to Girard, too. It was called "Walnut Acres." That was on the north side of the street. It had nothing in common with Girard as far as zoned property, or building homes. He kept that. Now, after he went into bankruptcy, they didn't combine it with Girard at that

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time neither, but later on they sold it off piece by piece and now it's part of Woodland Hills. It extends a way north. As I said, it only extended as far as Ventura boulevard at the time. Along Ventura boulevard from Topanga canyon to the easterly boundary, the ranch was on one side, Brant's ranch, and then there was nothing. We had stables. Everyone had horses. There was a little hardware store then they built a little drugstore and that had a little post office. That's where the post office was, in the drugstore. And we had a little restaurant. There was Rosie's Restaurant. I remember that. Nothing but little shacks. Then, as you drove toward Los Angeles you'd see nothing but little signs, you know, and little buildings. Nothing.

Dodson: Mr. Girard never built a pretentious house for himself here in the valley?

Schulman: Not here. He lived in Playa del Rey. Then he moved to Malibu in 1954. He had a house in Playa del Rey and I think they found oil at the house that he lived in. It was a lonely old house right on the ocean. I don't know how much oil he ever got out of it. He sold it and came out to, I think it was called Malibu.

Dodson: It may have been. I don't know the origin of that name. I don't know how long it was called that. We mentioned walnuts. Have you ever heard of pickling walnuts?

Schulman: Yes. I've eaten them.

Dodson: Is that right? Did you ever do it yourself?

Schulman: No.

Dodson: The first time that somebody ever said that to me I thought they were telling a joke at the time.

Schulman: No. They're delicious. You can go into, you know, an exclusive store and buy pickled Walnuts.

Dodson: Is that so?

Schulman: Sure you can. Jenson's was it?

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Voice: Jorgenson.

Schulman: Jorgenson. Stores like that. You can go in there and buy them.

Dodson: Well, I think I'm going to try it. I didn't know there was such a thing.

Schulman: They're good. Very good.

Dodson: Well, I sort of found out about it when we were interviewing the last ranch foreman for the Lankershim family. He mentioned that Jack Lankershim liked pickled walnuts. That's the first we'd heard about them.

Schulman: Is that so. They had, although I never pickled them, the ranch, Walnut Acres, every year the Diamond, you know the Diamond Walnuts?

Dodson: Yes.

Schulman: The Diamond people would come and pick the walnuts. We'd always bring some back. They were the most delicious walnuts but I never pickled them. {laughing} I was lazy.

Dodson: Well, I understand that to do that you wait for their, on the tree they're pretty green, when you can stick a pin through them then they're right for pickling. Before the shell hardens.

Schulman: Now, that I didn't know.

Dodson: Before they pickle them, while that green is still there before the shell gets hard. That's the way I understand it.

Schulman: No. When the Diamond people worked, come to pick em, you know, the were ready. They'd always bring us great big bags of walnuts.

Dodson: I see. One of the amazing things about this valley that I discovered was that the Lankershim family used to plant wheat in the southern part of the valley and wheat was a great crop. Now, by the time you came I assume there was no more wheat growing.

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Schulman: No. I don't ever remember wheat in the valley.

Dodson: You see, normally, we associate that with a temperate climate. That this would be too hot for it but the Lankershims experimented and found they could grow wheat.

Schulman: Is that so?

Dodson: So, at one time we apparently even had a flour mill out in the valley.

Schulman: I wonder what happened then?

Dodson: Well, I imagine the land got too valuable and that sort of thing.

Schulman: Uh huh.

Dodson: Because I know they subdivided some of their holdings.

Schulman: I'll tell you a funny, eh, a coincidence. When we decided to live here we rented a furnished house on Sunset. This was in 1918. We rented a bungalow on Sunset Boulevard near Normandy. Do you know the location?

Dodson: Well, I know about where it would be.

Schulman: Well, it was a bungalow. It was a nice old house. It had 2 bedrooms. You know how they built those old fashioned houses with the porches and all. When we rented that house for \$25 dollars a month, all furnished, it belonged to the Lankershim family. The old lady, she must have been a real old lady, died. They were living in the valley and whether she lived alone or not I don't know but we rented her house. We leased her house for \$25 dollars a month. After we lived there for about two years, I went to Chicago to visit my folks. My son was about 2 years old and we called Mr. Sherman, he said we could buy the house {interruption: the tape stopped.} My husband called me in Chicago

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and I said no. I didn't want to live that far out, but it was pretty there. That belonged to the Lankershim family. Old lady Lankershim.  
{Rest of sentence inaudible.}

Dodson: That could be. That could have been either the widow of Isaac Lankershim or the widow of Colonel J.B. Lankershim. Probably J.B. at that time. There have been about three generations of Lankershims connected with the history of the valley and Los Angeles. The first one came in 1869.

Schulman: Well, you know, there were these crazy quilts they'd call them patchwork. You know what I mean. It was in the house when we rented it, you know, furnished. Those quilts were dated 1860, 1865. They had the dates on em. Whoever made them put it there. I could have had them. I was young and foolish. I had no sense of value.

Dodson: Well, of course, we'd love to have one for our museum, too. Uh, but often people don't keep those things. Naturally, you can't keep everything and yet a hundred years from now everything in this house will be of great value.

Schulman: That's right.

Dodson: When it comes right down to it. We try to collect what we can but it's rather slow doing it.

Schulman: Well, the social life really wasn't, we had, most everybody that lived there had a horse or horses and we'd go on these night rides. We'd take the stable man with us. I said there was no such a thing as a barbecue, but I used to get steaks and we'd start out about 5 O'clock at night and the destination was always {inaudible}. I don't know if you know where that is?

Dodson: No, I don't.

Schulman: Well, it's a little bit farther west. Near, past, Calabasas. You know where Calabasas is?

Dodson: Oh! Yes.

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Schulman: And then, about midnight, we'd stop and they'd barbecue the steaks for us. They'd have someplace ready there for us to stay all night and they'd hitch up the horses for the night. We'd get up about 5 O'clock in the morning and off we'd go again. We used to do that about twice a month. We'd always look forward to it.

Dodson: I can imagine.

Schulman: And the kids would get on a horse, you know, and ride on Ventura boulevard. To cross you never had to look either way to see if a bus or a car was coming.

Dodson: Now, when you came I imagine horses were on their way out of style weren't they? That is, did many private individuals have horses by 1923?

Schulman: Well, we had two of them and there were three families in the valley that we were friendly with, they had had horses. One horse, at least. I imagine most people, as you say, that had these egg ranches had a horse. And you find places in the valley today where people have horses.

Dodson: Yes. No, I meant that by that time the automobile was coming in.

Schulman: Oh! It was coming in, yes. Sure, I got a 1923 model T Ford.

Dodson: {laughing} Is that right. Do you have any idea what that cost at the time you got it?

Schulman: Yes. I think, uh, \$400 and something.

Dodson: I see.

Schulman: My husband surprised me with it. I didn't know beans about driving. He had a Studebaker or something. His office was right on 4th and Spring. This fella comes up with this model T Ford and says, "this is yours." And I said, "what do I do with it?" I says, "I can't drive that. You'll have to show me how." So, he takes me in the car and we go down Topanga canyon, you know, put this foot here and this foot here, you know. That was the extent of the teaching and he brought me back.

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I was very anxious to go all the way downtown to show my husband I could drive. This was in November. I had one of the girls, her name was Thomas, Mrs. Thomas. He was city attorney at the time, Mr. Thomas. They lived out there. I called Leatha and I says, "are you game to ride into town with me?" My husband, I said Joe, that's my husband, "surprised me with this car and I don't want to go myself." At that time, in November, 4 or 4:30 it's beginning to get dark. I wore glasses it was a {inaudible}. So, we started out. She went with me. We started out and, OH, when I got to his office I was a wreak. Everybody swore so I said to my husband, "I'm not gonna drive this home. You'll have to drive it home." It was starting to drizzle and it must have been about 6 O'clock or a little after. He says, "I don't know beans about driving that car." He says, "you'll have to drive it home." The girl, Mrs. Thomas, went home with her husband and I was left alone to drive the car. My husband worked that night. How I got home, I don't know. That's how I learned to drive the Ford.

Dodson: The old Ford Model T was very different from the modern car.

Schulman: Yes.

Dodson: Cause it had three pedals.

Schulman: It wasn't exactly a coup but it had flaps on the sides, you know.

Dodson: Roadster, did they call em?

Schulman: Yes. uhm hum.

Dodson: I'm surprised that you could start off with practically no instruction.

Schulman: I was just young enough, ignorant enough, to do it.

Dodson: Did you go over Cahuenga? Was that the way you took?

Schulman: That's the way we hada go. We went down Ventura. I must've turned on Cahuenga. Highland Avenue, I think. Ventura cut into Highland and then I'd take Highland

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all the way to 4th street, to one of the streets that ran through and then right out to town.

Dodson: Cahuenga wouldn't have been paved at that time?

Schulman: It wasn't.

Dodson: Wasn't that pretty hard to drive over?

Schulman: It was. And Ventura wasn't paved, you know, for years. They started. Let's see, when did they start the freeway? The freeway only went a short distance, but you know all about that. The freeway went as far, I can't remember. Was it Laurel Canyon? One of the big streets. Then you'd have to get off and drive on the other streets. I can remember, my husband was in Washington, the state of Washington with his brother, and I had my sister-in-law staying with me and we were in town. Coming home we passed, after Laurel Canyon there was nothing. We got a blow out. We couldn't go any farther. It was almost midnight. The two of us sat down and waited. Finally a car came along and I knew who it belonged to, John Wyle [sp?]. I don't know whether the name has been mentioned.

Dodson: No, it hasn't been.

Schulman: Well, he was with Girard for a long time. I don't know in what capacity but he was one of Girard's right hand men. He lived out there and he had a Japenese chauffeur. I don't know where I got the strenght to hollar, "John." "John." That's how we got home otherwise we'd a sat there all night. No telephones. No, uh, and it was quite a distance from Girard at that time, you know.

Dodson: Well, now, on that particular Ford, didn't you have to crank that to start the motor? Did you crank it, yourself? Wasn't that quite a job?

Schulman: No, it wasn't. Nothing was a job for me when I was younger.

Dodson: In those days if a car had to be cranked, you cranked.

Schulman: Yes, I cranked it.

Dodson: {laughing} I see. I never tried cranking one of those

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old cars but I understand that you have to be careful that if you don't pull the crank out at exactly the right minute you can get a broken arm out of it.

Schulman: That's right. I was shown how to do that. But, as I say, when you're young your foolish. You're ignorant. You'll do things you'd never think, "now this can happen or that can happen." You just go ahead and do it.

Dodson: Well, of course, some things were probably safer than as far as crime is concerned. Uh, do you remember anything about that in the valley? Was there much crime?

Schulman: In the valley?

Dodson: robberies and burglaries and those kinds of things?

Schulman: No. Someone tried to, uh, that was one night when my husband was working, somebody tried to break into my place. I saw him. The living room had a fireplace, you know, in the middle of the wall and two windows that faced outside, you know. Our house was on a hill but it was terraced. They hadn't finished terracing it. They, it was muddy. They had an awful lot of that mud. What do you call it? Sticks to your feet?

Dodson: Asphalt? That sort of thing?

Schulman: No.

Dodson: Clay?

Schulman: That black clay. It was mud clay and I don't know what I did. I had a spanish woman that used to watch the children. She was asleep. I looked through the window and I saw this man. They were still working on the roads. I yelled so loud that, you know the noise the machinery makes when they're working on the road, they heard me. They came runnin and, sure enough, here was this mexican guy trying to get in. I don't know whether he was trying to get in on account of the woman or whether he was just breaking in but he tried to

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get into the front window. As a whole, I don't remember in the early part of the valley, the 1930's, 1920's.

Dodson: Well, now would you have felt safe going out for a walk by yourself at night, at that time?

Schulman: You couldn't walk. They had no sidewalks or anything. Later on I would. I wouldn't have any compunction about going out for a walk. I felt perfectly safe.

Dodson: So, you feel there has been a change?

Schulman: Oh, yes! Without a doubt. Just as much crime there now as there is in Los Angeles or in Van Nuys. I can remember when I lived on (inaudible) road, I had the cathedral window and I could see all parts of the valley and at night the only light I could see was the one on top of City Hall. Now, when you look out it's like a basket of jewels, you know, the valley with all the lights is just beautiful. But at that time I'd look out and watch for the children coming home from school in the winter when it was dark and all you would see was that one light.

Dodson: Since you've mentioned that, would you rather have the valley look as it did then or as it does now?

Schulman: Well, in a way, like it did then with more conveniences, you know what I mean?

Dodson: That would be the catch.

Schulman: Yes. Because it was beautiful then, you know, the ranches and everything. The air was so clean. It really was beautiful then.

Dodson: Well, since we've been talking about crime and sort of thing in the valley, what do you think about fashions and the changes that have occurred there?

Schulman: Fashions?

Dodson: Yes. Clothes.

Schulman: Oh, yes. Now, everything is so casual wherever you go, you know. You see slacks in a restaurant where you'd

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expect people to be well dressed. At that time you didn't see that. They'd dress up when they'd go out, really.

Dodson: How did your children dress when they went to school? Was it different than the way it is now?

Schulman: Yes. My children didn't wear shoes until they went to school. All year round they'd never wear shoes. They were barefoot. They'd dress like the kids do now. They didn't wear long pants or the overalls. They wore short pants and, you know, a shirt and a sweater. I think the kids are smoking now when they go to school because I often go with my daughter-in-law to pick up her grandchild and I see the way the kids are, you know.

Dodson: Would your daughter's grandchild dress differently than your children when they went to school, would you say?

Schulman: Well, the only difference is you'd never see a little girl in slacks like they wear now.

Dodson: They would have always worn dresses?

Schulman: Yes. Dresses. All the little girls you'd see wore dresses and the boys would wear short pants. They didn't wear long pants. I don't think the boys started to wear long pants until sometime in the late '20's really.

Dodson: They wore sort of knickers that came about to their knees.

Schulman: To thier knees, uh huh. Socks that came up to, you know.

Dodson: You think there have been changes in attitude on morality and that sort of thing with the passage of time?

Schulman: I wouldn't know. Course, I don't know much about that sort of thing. It's no different then any other place. Morality has changed all over the world.

Dodson: When you first came to the valley, can you tell us

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anything about the religious life out here? Were there many churches?

Schulman: Well, I'm jewish. We lived out where there were no temples or synagoggs. In Woodland Hills there still aren't any that I know of. My husband and other people that lived in Van Nuys and Encino and Lankershim got together and formed a synagog. I remember it was on Van Nuys Boulevard near, it was south of the boulevard.

Dodson: Would that have been the first one?

Schulman: I think that was the first one that I remember.

Dodson: One of my students who is jewish, about a year or so ago, wanted to write a paper on the first jewish settlers in the valley and she could find practically no information on that particular subject. She would have loved to have interviewed you and seen if you could have given her some material.

Schulman: Well, in where I lived, in Girard, I think we were the only jewish family. Now, it's all jews. A lot of jewish people live there. But, when we lived there I think we were about the only jewish family there. And we were there because my husband was {inaudible} you know, he was connected with Girard. Whether they ever built a synagog out there, I don't know. I think they do have one close to Woodland Hills. It's on Ventura Boulevard, maybe two miles, tow or three miles east of where Woodland Hills begins. I'm almost sure, because I've been there. Whether that belongs to Woodland Hills, I don't know. As I said, they've annexed so much property out to Woodland Hills.

Dodson: Well, so, when you first came then there wasn't a synagog in the valley?

Schulman: No, no.

Dodson: Did you go to Los Angeles then, to religious services?

Schulman: Yes. We went to one on 4th and New Hampshire. Chapel Isreal. Now, it's on Wilshire Boulevard and Holmby. At that time I used to bring, I took my children to Sunday school on New Hampshire and 4th. I'd drive em there. That was some drive.

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Dodson: That would've been. Yes.

Schulman: Uh huh.

Dodson: One early jewish family in the valley is the family of Sam Greenburg. Do you happen to know him?

Schulman: Sam Greenburg?

Dodson: Yes. Now, his family, I think at one time owned an early movie theater in the Van Nuys area.

Schulman: Hum.

Dodson: You don't recall that name?

Schulman: No. No, some of the early families that I knew where the Zuckermans [sp?]. They're still alive. I think they were one of the oldest families here. There were the Corinsons, which, most of them have gone. I'm trying to think of the jewish families that we met when we first came here. The Kaufmans. Isn't that funny, I don't recall Greenburg at all. The Levines. They're a very well known family. That's in town, the jewish people in town, but out here I really, we didn't know, I knew {inaudible}.

Dodson: I thought I would put down the names of some that were still here if you can. . .

Schulman: {interrupting} No, no they're gone. They're mostly all gone. The ones that I knew.

Dodson: I see.

Schulman: They lived in the valley, but I couldn't tell you, I mean those that I know, that I knew at the time we lived here, when it first started, I couldn't tell you if they were alive or not because I haven't kept in touch with them. So many have moved away.

Dodson: I suppose.

Schulman: Well, I know for a fact they have. Some of the real old

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timers. They've gone to Laguna and, well, you know, to the suburbs.

Dodson: Did you ever come in contact with A. Levy, the man whose name is perpetuated in the of the Bank of A. Levy? He really lived just over the line in Ventura but he had, I think, some interests in the valley.

Schulman: I don't recall. I don't remember as well as I'd like to remember. Names escape me.

Dodson: Well, I couldn't expect you to do that because names escape me at the present time.

Schulman: I know sometimes when I go someplace I see a face and I know I know them but I don't remember their name and I'm ashamed to ask are you so and so.

Dodson: Now, I have a hard time remembering some of the names of my students that were in my class, say, about two or three years ago.

Schulman: Well, that's because it changes all the time. Doesn't it?

Dodson: Yes, because you do have a new group every semester. So, it is hard to remember. That's true. Randy, do you have any questions you'd like to ask?

Thompson: I don't know. Were there many minorities in the valley at that time.

Schulman: Mexicans.

Thompson: Blacks?

Schulman: Blacks. No. There were mexicans. In fact, they had a school for mexican children in Canoga Park.

Dodson: Is that right?

Schulman: Yes.

Thompson: Where was it?

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Schulman: Right near the Canoga Park high school. They had a school for mexicans. I'll tell ya a funny story. My youngest son he gets very, very tan. He's dark anyway and in, well, it's that color in the summertime. So, when he first started, first we had a little school in Girard. Then, I think it only went up to the 6th grade then he had to go over to Canoga Park junior high or something like that. They thought he was mexican. They put him in the mexican school. Really, and I didn't know about it until he had been there maybe two or three weeks, you know. He was having a terrible time with his spanish and the teacher wanted to see me. So, I came down to see her and I said, "what is he doing here? He's not spanish." Mexican. So, that's how I remember that. In later years they did away with that school.

Dodson: That's what we wanted to ask. Were the schools segregated then?

Schulman: At that time. It was at that time. They had a school for the mexican children.

Dodson: I see.

Schulman: But coloreds. I can't remember that there were any colored people out here at all.

Dodson: Maybe they came in later.

Schulman: They must have because I don't remember any at all.

Dodson: I imagine that they began coming in in greater numbers after the war. Uh, I think. . . .

Schulman: {interrupting} You see, after World War II my husband wanted to go into the army. Both my boys were service men and he had {inaudible} he wanted to go and apply. They wouldn't take him. He felt very badly when his two boys were in service and he wasn't. He was still a young man then. So, they told him that if he wanted to go to Las Vegas, uh, {inaudible} which was the government. They were building houses, you know, they needed, they were bringing in {inaudible}. So he did and there was a time, about 3 years, when we left

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Girard. No, it was Woodland Hills. It changed in '30 something. '31, '32, they changed the name. It was still Girard, uh, it was still Woodland Hills. We moved to Las Vegas for 3 years. Then, when we came back, instead of going out to the valley again we sold our house, sold everything, during the war. Gave it away. We had a house with 3 acres. Beautiful house. In fact, Jerry Girard, that's the old man's son, took the house because he moved to New York. We bought the house, we had 3 acres of ground on top of the hill. We could just see the whole world. It had about a hundred citrus trees and a hundred {inaudible} fruit trees. While we lived in Las Vegas this realator that knew my husband called and wanted to know if we'd sell the house. His boys, one was a {inaudible} and the other, I don't know where he was. I think he was on {inaudible}. I just didn't care about anything. I says "yes." He says, "furnished?" We had a baby grand piano and a brand new gas stove. I was telling you about it. The gas was in then. We sold the whole thing for \$10,000. Today, there are eight houses on the ground. They still have the house that we lived in there but there are eight houses that were built on the acreage that we sold. So, then we stayed. We came back in 1945. We stayed here and we traveled. I traveled with my husband until he took sick. We bought property and built an apartment house on it on Sunset Boulevard in Brentwood. We lived there for sometime until my husband took sick and passed away. Then I came out here. My son built this building. I had the apartment downstairs. I lived there for awhile. Then I took sick. They didn't want me to be alone so I came up here.

Dodson: During the war period you were in Las Vegas, then? You didn't live here. Do you remember the affects of the depression on the valley?

Schulman: Definitely.

Dodson: Were you and your husband much affected by that?

Schulman: Well, yes and no. I really can't say we suffered. We still had our house. Commodities were so cheap then. We were able to get along. We each had our little farm and the boys were away at military school

during the depression. So, I can't say we suffered by it. We didn't. We were lucky.

Dodson: Well, that's what most people have told us. They felt that the valley wasn't hit as hard as some other sections. Maybe it was because we weren't industrialized here. We didn't get a great deal of unemployment.

Schulman: I know there were alot of people that came in from the east, you know, during the depression. They found things so much cheaper here then. It's different now.

Dodson: Yes. How has the earthquake situation affected you? Now, you came from Chicago where they don't have earthquakes.

Schulman: No. The first one I felt was the 1918 in Hemmit [sp?]. I lived, uh, {inaudible due to dog's barking.] We felt it. Course, it was on a Sunday and I was drinking coffee. I thought I was {inaudible} or something.

Dodson: The coffee was moving around and. . .

Schulman: {interrupting} Yes, and I says, "there's something the matter." That was the first one I felt. Then, the other one was in 1925. They had a kind of, uh, we were in Girard then. In Santa Barbara they had a bad one. I remember it was early in the morning and our bed slid from one wall to the other wall. You know, right across the room and back again. It frightened ya. The one in 1933 was really a very bad one.

Dodson: {interrupting} That was the Long Beach. . . .

Schulman: {interrupting} Yes. I felt, I think that was worse than the one we had in '72, was it?

Dodson: '71.

Schulman: '71. Really?

Dodson: You felt that you, did you feel that more than the '71?

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Schulman: Absolutely! The 1933 was a very bad one, I thought.

Dodson: I think that, from my interviews, that people living in the south part of the valley didn't feel that '71 quake nearly as much as people living in the north part of the valley.

Schulman: Well, my other son, he was evacuated. He couldn't go home for 3 days on account of the reservoir, you know. He lived in Sepulveda.

Dodson: I see. That Van Norman reservoir.

Schulman: They had it all closed up, you know. They couldn't let, I had them living here. My son and his wife. They expected that dam to break and if that dam would've broken there would have been about 80 thousand people drowned.

Dodson: No structural damage was done to your property in this part of the valley.

Schulman: No, No. Of course, dishes were broken. Things like that. But in her house, course she wasn't able to go home for three days, but when she did go home, when she opened the door and went in, Oh!, there was broken dishes and things about that deep, you know, all over the place. Things that were in her cooler and in her dishwasher and in her refrigerator. Everything was flung open.

Dodson: It seems to have been felt in rather strange ways. Now, apparently people further south in different parts of Los Angeles felt it more strongly than in the southern part of the valley.

Schulman: I didn't know that. Did you? {Possibly gesturing to another person in the room.}

Voice: I felt it. I felt it.

Dodson: Is that so, but I've heard that many of the tall buildings in Los Angeles had their elevators locked.

Schulman: See, it didn't know that at all because. . . .

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Voice: {interrupting, however, the text is inaudible.)

Dodson: No serious damage?

Voice: My parents, who live at Woodman and Ventura, all the windows in their store broke. It was frightening.

Dodson: I can imagine. What has that done to you as far as any earthquakes in the future is concerned? Are you afraid of them?

Schulman: I don't think of em. We were sitting here, when was it?

Voice: New Years day.

Schulman: New Years day and I don't know, there must have been eight or nine people in the house and I wanna tell you this place went like that. Didn't it Pearl? Didn't phase any of us. The dog didn't like it. It bothered her but, you know, I never think of it. I go to bed at night and, if I listen to the television set sometimes and hear that they're predicting it on such and such a date, they've done it so often I ignore it. If it hits me it'll hit everybody. It's a selfish way to think, isn't it?

Dodson: I don't know. {laughing} Is it a sort of a "misery loves company."

Schulman: But, there isn't anything, that's the bad thing about an earthquake, there isn't anything {tape stopped.} built a lodge all made of redwood 5000 feet up. You looked down at the ocean and it looked like a white ribbon. It was the most beautiful country in the world. Hearst's property was right near there. In fact, Hearst's man was a very good friend of, his overseer there, was a good friend of Victor Girard. He was up there at the time we went there. We had to pack in by, first we went by train to King City. No, first we went by automobile to King City. From King City we took some kind of a train that took us to the foot of these mountains and they had horses pack, uh, there was this man and Mr. Girard and he took

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his chauffeur along and he took his secretary along. There were about 7 of us. They had horses for all of us. We were packed in. We climbed 5000 feet on horseback, like this. We got up there, it was the most beautiful sight. He had a beautiful lodge. We stayed up there 3 weeks and then, Hearst was just beginning to build his lodge right down there and, as I say, the man that had charge was a good friend of Mr. Girard, he took us down and showed us where this was gonna be and, you know, all the plumbing had come in. It was solid gold.

Dodson: My, that must have cost a fortune.

Schulman: Poor man! We stayed up there 3 weeks. His lodge burnt down. Girards did. I don't know if it was an accident or what it was but it was the most heavenly 3 weeks I'd ever spent in my life. We'd get up at 5 O'clock in the morning. Get on horseback. Go down to where, what they called, like a field, you know. Very smooth, water running through and we'd fish for trout. We'd bring it up and cook the fish for breakfast. Oh, it was wonderful. I think, that was in 1926, but, you know, I look back now and I can't believe that that ever happened.

Dodson: Well, I suppose that's true. That everything has changed so much that it's hard to picture it.

Schulman: Um hum. Yes, I went up to the Hearst Castle. They opened up in '79 where you don't have to go up the mountain anymore, you know. They opened up a road. Have you ever been there?

Dodson: Yes.

Schulman: Doesn't look a bit like it didn when we were there.

Dodson: Is that right?

Schulman: Because we came through that country, the mountains, you know. This is all smooth when you go up there. I was so disappointed I was sorry I went to see it.

Dodson: Then the entry that you used, the way you got in must be different.

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Schulman: Yes. We came in up the back way. You see, there was no road at all that led to that property. That's why we had to pack in by horse. Horseback.

Dodson: Mr. Hearst must have had quite a job building it then.

Schulman: Yes.

Dodson: Lack of roads.

Schulman: Yes, um hum, it was beautiful.

Dodson: Is there anything about the history of the valley that you look back on with a special interest? Either something good or something bad about the history of the valley?

Schulman: Well, I can't say that there's anything bad about it because you can't stop progress. As I say, when we came to the valley it was just like a little squeaky, you know, village. You see it today, personally, I would've. . {interrupted by somthing} Huh? What's {inaudible}.

Pearl: I said it was nicer then.

Schulman: Yes. That's what I say, personally I would've liked it the way it was.

Dodson: Yes, but on the other hand, you've probably become used to convieniences now that didn't exist then. So, that's the other side of the story.

Thompson: When you came back after being away in Las Vegas, did it surprise you to see how much the valley had grown?

Schulman: It didn't grow so much while we were gone. It started to grow after 1945, really. '43 to '45 it started to grow. My brother-in-law, my husband's brother, he passed away. He bought alot of property out of tax sales, you know. Lots that he bought for \$400 dollars he sold for \$75,000 dollars.

Dodson: Is that right? How long has your family lived in the valley, Wendy.

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Wendy: We've lived here for 18 years.

Schulman: 18. They've seen a big change too. Have you been out to Westlake?

Dodson: Westlake? I don't recognize where that is, so, I guess not.

Schulman: Well, that's, uh, how many miles west?

Voice: About a half hour.

Schulman: About a half hours drive, but it's the most beautiful spot in California.

Voice: {In the background} It's about 25 miles. Just the other side of Calabasas.

Schulman: Their doing a lot of building out there.

Dodson: I see.

Schulman: That's the most beautiful spot in the valley.

Voice: {In the background} 20 miles to Lake {inaudible}.

Dodson: Oh! I've heard of it but I never knew just where it was.

Voice: {Inaudible: Giving some kind of directions}

Dodson: One of our oldest houses is located in Calabasas; the Leonis Adobe. Are you familiar with that house?

Schulman: I know what house it is. We used to know Foyer. That was a sheep ranch, you know. Foyer used to have his ranch up there. He owned quite a bit of it. He's long gone. Take his sheep out, you know. He was a herder. He was a lame man. He was a very nice man and I remember I used to have so many arguments with him. He used to bring his sheep in, you know. I had grape vines and things, you know. He'd bring em through and they'd eat them. They nibble on everything. One time I got so darn sore at him I says, "Foyer, if you ever bring your sheep here again I'll." I don't remember just what I

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said but the next day he brought me a little lamb. I took it down to the butcher shop. Course, they cut it up for us and everything. She didn't. I didn't know you then. We used it on Herbert's 16th birthday. We had his birthday party. As I say, Canoga Park was Owensmouth then and they had a Piggly Wiggly, which is Safeway now.

I knew the butcher very well and he cut up the lamb and made the chops. Just beautiful pieces. He brought em to the club and Herbert, that's her husband, invited his friends and, it wasn't a barbecue cause they didn't have barbecues.

Voice: It was a barbecue.

Schulman: Was it a barbecue? Did they bring a barbecue outside?

Voice: {We are presuming it is Wendy} Yes.

Schulman: And we had it for his 16th birthday. Foyer was always careful about his sheep after that. That's all Calabasas was was a sheep ranch and people were ashamed to say I live in Calabasas.

Dodson: I understand it had a reputation in the early days of being a pretty rough sort of town.

Schulman: Yes. Absolutely.

Dodson: Was that still true when you came to the valley, that it had this reputation?

Schulman: Yes. It had a bad reputation and it's beautiful now. Have you been there?

Dodson: Yes, yes.

Schulman: And another interesting thing I think you'd like to know. You've heard of Agoura?

Dodson: Yes.

Schulman: Well, we knew the Agoura family. Now, they used to own property on 7th and Olive. They were very wealthy.

Voice: {Wendy interrupting to tell Mrs. Schulman that she has to leave and will be back in an hour and a half.}

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Schulman: Drive carefully, dear.

Dodson: Didn't Mr. Agoura own the Leonis Adobe out there, at one time?

Schulman: Yes, yes. Uh huh. They lived farther west, you know. In the valley. They didn't live right in Girard or Woodland Hills in the beginning.

Dodson: They lived further west than Calabasas I gather?

Schulman: Yes, yes. Uh huh. They were really a nice family but the children were terrible. They were drinkers, all of em. They'd have the police there almost every night, you know. We could hear the row that was going on. They lost everything.

Dodson: That's what I understand. We have met one man that used to live with them when he was a child. Uh, Velardi.

Schulman: Really?

Dodson: Fausto Velardi. Did you, uh, have you ever heard that name?

Schulman: Yes, I have. I have heard that name.

Dodson: He was adopted by Agoura, I think.

Schulman: Is that so? I didn't know, you know, the {inaudible} or what they was, but I know the name.

Dodson: Incidentally, we have heard ghost stories about that Leonis Adobe. Have you heard any of those? That the spirit of Leonis, sometimes, is heard walking up the steps and that sort of thing. The only ghost story I've ever heard about anything in the valley.

Schulman: I've never heard that story.

Dodson: Well, I've heard several different things. At one time, There were a group of ladies sitting on the porch after Leonis was killed and they saw him coming up the road and then he vanished into an oak tree. Then, people imagine they hear him walking up the steps. . .

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Schulman: {Interrupting} You're imagination can play all kinds of tricks with ya.

Dodson: That's right. Certainly, if you think there's a ghost there I imagine it helps you hear it.

Schulman: I'm, uh, I know after my husband died I was alone. He never cared for television. He'd listen to the news, you know. He'd be in his den but when the news would come on he'd walk out of his den and tap me on the shoulder and say, "turn it on." And do you know for one whole year I could hear him.

Dodson: Is that so?

Schulman: Every night. Walking out of the den and tapping me on the shoulder. That's imagination.

Dodson: Yeah. Would you feel that when you turned on the news because you were so accustomed to him doing that?

Schulman: NO, no! He'd come out and he'd say, "it's time for the news." I'd be listening to something else. I could hear his footsteps just as plain. I was always afraid to turn around.

Dodson: {chuckling} Is that right?

Schulman: But that's your imagination. I know.

Dodson: Well, I don't put much stock in the ghost story myself but it's the only one I've heard about the valley.

Schulman: I think I've heard of it but I don't think there's a bit of truth in it. Maybe there was. I don't know.

Dodson: I'm a little bit doubtful myself.

Schulman: Because I've read of certain people, this Elke Sommers. The actress.

Dodson: Yes.

Schulman: She's married to, uh, he'd a very fine writer. They claim their house is haunted but they won't move.

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They had proof. They'd be upstairs and they'd hear this noise and they wouldn't go downstairs til after the noise quieted down. They'd go down and find chairs turned over and dishes put in different places.

Dodson: I think I read an article about that.

Schulman: Yes, um huh.

Dodson: What do you think is probably the most important thing in the valley in history after you got here that you have an opinions on what would have been important after you came?

Schulman: {after a long pause} You know, I really can't think of anything important because I wasn't interested in politics. I wasn't interested in, I was interested when somebody was running for President or something like that, you know. I'd listen to Pro's and Con's from different people but to say that some one thing was the most important, I think the freeway.

Dodson: I think it was. Now, people that came before you came would say the bringing of the water in but, of course, that happened in 1913. Before you came.

Schulman: Yes.

Dodson: But that very well could be.

Schulman: Back when they brought the water from the Owens valley?

Dodson: Yes.

Schulman: Mulholland did that. We knew his grand-daughter very well. She went to school with my younger son.

Dodson: Is that right?

Schulman: Uh huh.

Dodson: Yes. We've had her at the college to speak to our museum association.

Schulman: Uh huh.

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Dodson: In fact, she's written a book about the early days in Calabasas.

Schulman: Really?

Dodson: Calabasas Girls is the name of it.

Schulman: I'll have to get a hold of it. It should be interesting to read.

Dodson: Yes, it is. It's very well written. Randy, do you have anything that you'd like to ask about?

Thompson: No.

Dodson: You feel that we've covered everything?

Schulman: I wish I could remember a whole lot more. I remember when we had rainy weather half the people that worked in town couldn't get back to Girard to live.

Dodson: I can imagine. There have been one or two bad floods.

Schulman: It was very bad.

Dodson: I think there was a flood in 1938, was it?

Schulman: Yes, and one in 1933. A very bad one. 1938 was very bad I know that people called me up and asked me, you know the telephones were out and everything. They asked me to drive up to their, they called em cabins. They were lots of little cabins, you know. They were really little houses they couldn't sell and people that bought them used them for their cabin. The mud was adobe, you know. Very, very, uh, your car could sink right into it. "Would you drive up and tell my wife or my mother or something that we can't get home and have to stay the night?" I'd drop my david, my boy. We'd get in the car. At that time I had an Essex and how we ever got to places and got back down. God had his arms around us, really. We had to get the message to them. There wasn't anybody else to call. My husband wasn't home. He couldn't get home either.

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Dodson: Well, I know that the flood situation is evidently better. It was very bad at times.

Schulman: At that time it was. When it would rain hard and people lived in Canoga Park and it was Winnetka then. There's Winnetka avenue. Now, there's a town named Winnetka. It's right near, uh, all the little towns near Canoga Park. Winnetka and all that. Then it would. . . .

Dodson: I believe that's your telephone.

Schulman: Yes, pardon me.

Dodson: Well, we've turned this back on again, now.

Thompson: We're there any hospitals or anything out this way?

Schulman: Hospitals? We have some very goog hospitals now. We have St. Joseph's. Not in Woodland Hills. I don't know what hospital they have there. I'm talking about the valley. Are you talking about Woodland Hills?

Thompson: Uh, basically earlier. When you first got here.

Schulman: Oh, earlier! You know, there were no hospitals that I remember. My son was bitten by a dog and I had to wrap it in towels and run to Van Nuys to the emergency there. It really wasn't a hospital. It was more like an emergency. . . .

Dodson: Sort of temorary?

Schulman: Yes. I think the closest hospital were the Presbyterian. They have a Presbyterian out here now but at that time it was in Hollywood; the Presbyterian Hospital. Outside of this emergency hospital on Van Nuys boulevard, we didn't have any in Woodland Hills. I know anything that we had done we, the doctors that we had, were in Los Angeles. If there was any operating, my husband had his tonsils taken out. It was in town. That was called the Cedars Hospital. Now, it's Cedar-Sinai. That was on Fountain Avenue in Hollywood.

Dodson: Yes. That has changed it's location only fairly

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recently. Aren't they in a different place now instead of on Fountain?

Schulman: Well, Cedars is now a clinic. Cedar-Sinai is one of the biggest hospitals I've ever been in. It's the best equipped hospital in the United States now.

Dodson: I see. Where is that located?

Schulman: It's on Beverly Drive, uh, Beverly Boulevard and La Cieniga. You can't miss it. My God! It takes up I don't know how much space.

Thompson: Isn't that considered Century City out there?

Schulman: Century City? That's a different hospital. There's the Century City hospital but this is Cedar-Sinai converged and they have the finest equipment there, they say, of anyplace in the country. You go in there and when you go to come out, you're lost. Just can't find your way around there. When we lived in Woodland Hills we didn't have a doctor there. There wasn't a doctor there that I knew of. We knew a veterinarian there that had 8 dogs.

Dodson: In the early days, one doctor's name has come up. That's Dr. Canby. Do you remember that name?

Schulman: Canby?

Dodson: Yes. In fact, we interviewed his son. He apparently was pretty well-known in the Van Nuys area but maybe not in Girard.

Schulman: No, no it wasn't. The west end of the valley, at that time, was really dead. It started coming to life right after the war.

Dodson: I see. Now, at the present time there's some agitation about separating the valley from Los Angeles and making it an independant city. Would you favor that?

Schulman: To tell the truth, I don't know what difference it would make to me. Maybe, if I were younger I could look at things differently but now I feel, what difference would it make to me now.

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Dodson: I see. Another controversy, of course, is over this bussing. Do you have an opinion on that?

Schulman: Well, I have my own opinion and then I was sort of told by my grand-daughter that, this daughter's oldest daughter, she's very liberal and her husband is too. They have a boy and a girl. The girl was bussed all last year and they approved of it.

Dodson: Is that right?

Schulman: Yes. This year she isn't bussed because they took another group from the same school but, you know, I think it changed her mind a little bit, now. She found out that the colored peopl, uh, black people are as much against bussing as the white people are. Now, she wanted to see how the black children and the white children were getting along in school so, my grand-daughter and a few of the other mothers had a party at school. The {inaudible} canyon school here. A luncheon, for all the mothers, you know. And all the white mothers showed up and not one black mother showed up.

Dodson: I see.

Schulman: So, you see, the interest wasn't there.

Dodson: Where was your grand-daughter bussed to? How far away?

Schulman: My great-granddaughter. All the way to Hobart Avenue. Now, you know how far that is. Do you know where Hobart Avenue is?

Dodson: I know the name but I'm not sure where it is.

Schulman: Do you know where Western Avenue is?

Dodson: Yes.

Schulman: Well, it's east of Western Avenue. About 6 blocks east of Western Avenue and I don't know how many blocks south. So, you see, that was a long distance.

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Dodson: Yes.

Schulman: But she liked it. The child liked it and she was disappointed when she couldn't go back this year.

Dodson: Is that right? She didn't object to the bussing, the time on the bus?

Schulman: No. She liked the kids. They're outgoing children and I think that's what makes the difference to them. It doesn't matter if you're black, white, or what. You know. It proved something to them in that none of the mothers of black children showed up. You know to meet the mothers of the other kids and I don't know how they could accomplish anything. Now, here are children that live a way out, the kids that live, that go to school here, they go to each others birthday parties. They belong to the BlueBirds and they do this and that. You can't do it with children that live miles away, can you?

Dodson: No, that's true.

Schulman: So, what do you accomplish?

Dodson: Well, I think you mentioned one thing that has been brought up. It's hard to get parents to travel a considerable distance to attend PTA meetings and that sort of thing.

Schulman: Yes.

Dodson: So, there were really no complications though? As far as your great-granddaughter was concerned?

Schulman: No. No complications. She loved it. And, as I say, she was disappointed that this year she wasn't bussed. The children couldn't become friends and what they could accomplish by being in school together for a couple of hours, I don't understand. Because, as they grow up, they have different, uh, maybe all white or maybe all black. The black children that they had with them in the early days maybe they'll never see again. I think it could be done around the

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home. It's what the parents say in front of their children and to their children, you know, about blacks and whites and other denominations. I think that's where it should be done; in the home.

Dodson: I don't doubt that it's possible to influence a child by a conversation that goes on in the home.

Schulman: That's what I mean.

Dodson: Yes. You're right. Well, I think that we pretty much covered the things that I had on my outline.

Schulman: I hope I helped some. . . .

Dodson: {interrupting} You've helped a great deal.

Schulman: {continuing through his statement} I really have forgotten so much.

Dodson: Can you think of anything that we haven't asked about that you think ought to be preserved for posterity here?

Schulman: No. I told you about the fire engine, the water. No gas. The people. There's still some people have you come across Shaw? The name of Shaw?

Dodson: No, we haven't.

Schulman: He was with Girard when we first started. He was, uh, did the roadwork. Helped do the road work. he still lives in Woodland Hills.

Dodson: I see. Well, if we knew the initials we could probably see. . . .

Schulman: {interrupting} Alan.

Dodson: Alan Shaw?

Schulman: Uh huh. A very nice person.

Dodson: Well, we'll try an look him up and see if he's interested.

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Schulman: You can tell him that I mentioned him.

Dodson: Alright. Anything else, Randy, that you can think of?

Thompson: No.

Dodson: Well, we certainly appreciate what you've done for us.

Schulman: I don't know how much but I'm happy to do it.

Dodson: Well, you've given us the first real account of Girard that we've had from anyone. So, we're delighted to get it. And hear something about Mr. Girard himself that we haven't had from anyone else. You see each person can contribute something that no one else has.

Schulman: We were very friendly with Mr. Girard. We had him over for dinner, you know, and we went to his home. He was a likable person to us. But, I think, people that he sold property to, you know, they lost everything, they turned very, very, bitter.

Dodson: Your husband never had any feeling that Mr. Girard took advantage of him in any way?

Schulman: I don't think so. If he did, he never told me.

Dodson: I see. Well, chances are he didn't then or he probably would have said something.

Schulman: Probably.

Dodson: Well, again, we certainly appreciate what you've done for us.

Schulman: Well, I'm glad you came out.

Interview With Loretta Schulman

This has been an interview with Mrs. Loretta Schulman of 4526 Coldwater Canyon, Studio City. The interview was conducted by Dr. James L. Dodson, curator of the Los Angeles Valley College Historical Museum and Miss Randy Thompson, field deputy of the Los Angeles Valley College Historical Museum. The date is April 26, 1979.